

# Spotlight

Mayor's Office  
for Senior Citizens

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Department

SPRING 2006

## Women and aging: Changing roles, but still making a difference

*By Sharon Nickels, First Lady of Seattle*

It's funny how the prime of life keeps changing. Greg and I both turned 50 this year, a major milestone and what seems to be a perfect age. In fact, every new year is different, and better. And as we age and our roles change, life is a continuing adventure.

Our kids, Jake and Carey, are in their 20s — finishing college and starting careers. Their cousins are starting families, and while I would encourage Jake and Carey to wait until their careers are well established, I realize they will make similar commitments before very many years go by. My role as a mother continues to change.

Our parents have also aged. We have faced disability, long-term care and end of life issues. Housing options, financial security and long-term health care are regular topics for discussion — topics we now share with friends instead of what happened during our children's soccer game. My role in my extended family continues to change.

I continue to work for the Environmental Protection Agency, monitoring technical assistance and response team contracts. In recent months, I have traveled to Louisiana twice, each time staying two weeks to help coordinate hurricane cleanup efforts. While I work, I have friends who are retiring and I am increasingly aware of the decisions I need to make before I retire.



*Life is a continuing adventure with  
Greg and Sharon Nickels*

I continue to learn new things everyday. I have learned I have a role in sharing a historical perspective to newer employees. My role as a co-worker continues to change.

These changes raise questions of planning for the latter part of my life: How does one grow old gracefully, all the while enjoying good health and maintaining independence? How will I continue to make a difference?

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As Mayor of Seattle, Greg makes a difference every day. Currently he is addressing three critical areas — affordable housing, education and transportation — that squarely affect how each of us lives in Seattle.

Some ways I make a difference outside of work and family include sewing polarfleece blankets to donate to fundraising auctions and mowing lawns — something my family jokes about but my neighbors appreciate. But I enjoy these activities and know they make a difference to our neighborhood and community. As my other roles change, I hope my contributions to my community can continue for decades to come.

Former president Jimmy Carter wrote in *The Virtues of Aging* that you don't need to be a former president (or first lady) to make a difference in your own life and the lives of others. He says you can make a difference by staying active and self-reliant, putting your affairs in order, and getting involved with others. I think that's good advice.

That's also right in line with the mission of the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens, to support healthy aging, independent living, and social and civic engagement as we grow older. As each of us considers our changing roles and makes decisions related to aging — whether we're baby boomers or octogenarians — it's nice to know there's an office with people who can answer questions, provide information and assistance, and make referrals to appropriate resources.

If you have a question or concern about aging, call the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens at (206) 684-0500, visit their new office in the Central Building, Suite 350, at 810 Third Avenue (between Columbia & Marion Streets). You can also get more information about their programs and services at [www.seattle.gov/humanservices/mosc/](http://www.seattle.gov/humanservices/mosc/) on the Web.

## The older Black woman — what is her plight?

by Margaret Boddie, Mayor's Council on African American Elders



Older African American women in Seattle are living longer, but not better. Aging has a special impact on older women, but especially older African American women, who suffer the triple burden of ageism, sexism and racial discrimination.

The long-term effects of racism — poverty, health disparities, living in high crime areas, living with fear and isolation — continue to influence older women's daily lives. They came from an era of Jim Crow exclusion, leading many to believe that today's benefits and freedoms are not for them.

The poverty rate for African Americans age 65 and older is more than twice that of all older people. Twenty-eight percent of African American women 65 and older live below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), 39% live below 125% of FPL, and almost half of older African American women live below 150% of FPL (AARP Public Policy Institute, September 2004).

In 1998, nearly half of women age 65 and

above were widowed and 70% of them lived alone. In 2005, 70% of adults age 85 and older in the United States are women. The majority of this age group will need assistance in more than one activity of daily living. Older women reported more problems with physical functioning than older men. In 2002, 31% of women reported they were unable to perform at least one of five activities, compared with 18% of men.

Older women are also more likely to report clinically-relevant depressive symptoms than older men. In 2002, 16% of women age 65-69 reported depressive symptoms compared with 10% of men. At age 85 and over, 22% of women reported depressive symptoms compared with 15% of men. A significant number will have or are at risk for some form of dementia. To meet these challenges, older women will need substantial assistance and support to maintain independence.

In 1999, African Americans over 65 years of age had the highest rates of poverty among any group, with 18.1% living below the FPL, compared to 5.9% of their Caucasian counterparts (Epidemiology, Planning and Evaluation Unit, Public Health—Seattle & King County, 7/04).

The number of Washingtonians age 65 and older is expected to double by 2020. Moreover, Washington has the eighth most rapidly aging populations in the United States (Washington Department of Health, News Release, June 11, 2004; 04-067).

The African American older population is also increasing. For example, in 1990 there were 7,220 African Americans age 60 and over in King County. By 2000, that number had increased by 8.4% to 8,573. It is important to note, however, that the oldest segment of the population, people 85 and older, is rapidly increasing and will continue to do so for the remainder of the decade. According to the 2000 Census, there are 469 African Americans age 85+ who live alone in the Seattle area. This group, expected to increase dramatically in the future, is the frailest and require the greatest amount of support.



African Americans experience disparities in the burden of illness and death compared to the population as a whole. For example, in 2000–2002, older African Americans were more likely to die from heart disease, diabetes, hypertensive renal disease, and cancer, compared to their White counterparts; with older African American men being 1.65 times more likely to die from prostate cancer than their male counterparts (Death Certificated Data: Washington State Department of Health, Center of Health Statistics).

Additional data indicates that 27.3% of African Americans age 50 and over are obese, compared to 18.3% of Whites; 22.7% have been diagnosed with diabetes, compared to 9.3% of Whites; and 14.9% of African Americans have had a heart attack or heart disease, compared to 11.4% of Whites (Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, King County, 1987-2002; Washington State Department of Health: U. S. Centers of Disease Control).

In a community survey two years ago, the Mayor's Council on African American Elders found that access to services and information, and community support and involvement were among the most pressing needs of African American residents of Seattle and King County. Barriers to receiving much needed services

included isolation, lack of information about services and resources, limited income, physical limitations and other health problems.

In February 2006, the Mayor's Council on African American Elders presented a community forum called The Plight of the Older Black Woman. The forum addressed the health and social issues of older African American women, increased awareness and support from the community in which they reside, and provided information about current needs, health conditions, gaps in services, and available services.

For more information about the forum or the Mayor's Council on African American Elders, contact Margaret Boddie at (206) 328-6840 or [MargaretB@ccsww.org](mailto:MargaretB@ccsww.org).



# Need a referral? Get help from Senior Information and Assistance

by John Deagen, Senior Services of Seattle/King County



*John Deagen helps a client with a referral.*

Cindy had long been concerned about her neighbor, Georgia. She was nearing eighty, had difficulty walking and was unable to drive. Cindy tried to stop by at least twice a week just to see how Georgia was doing. Georgia was always pleasant and cheerful and insisted that she was doing just fine, despite her infirmities. Then, Georgia began to repeat herself more and Cindy was not sure if Georgia recognized her. She was no longer “Cindy” to Georgia, but “dear” or “honey.” Cindy tried to visit more and stay a little longer. Still, the visits tended to take place only on Georgia’s porch.

One day, Cindy saw a Seattle Public Utilities truck outside of Georgia’s house. She decided to walk over and make sure everything was alright. “Everything is fine now,” the technician said, “we got the water turned back on.”

As it turns out, Georgia’s water had been turned off for a month because she had not paid her bill. What concerned Cindy was when she asked Georgia about the water, Georgia seemed to have no idea

that her water had been off. Cindy wondered what else Georgia was not aware of, what other bills might be delinquent. She began to question whether Georgia could continue to live alone. Cindy decided that Georgia needed some help so she called the Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens.

Georgia’s inability to track daily information such as her water being shut-off put her at risk for a crisis. A Senior Information & Assistance Advocate at the Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens made a referral to the Geriatric Regional Assessment Team (GRAT) to assess Georgia’s mental health. GRAT determined that Georgia had dementia and paranoia. They also discovered that someone else besides Cindy had noted Georgia’s predicament. Someone had called Adult Protective Services (APS), and they were also looking into Georgia’s situation.

What a situation it was! When Georgia finally set aside her paranoia and let a GRAT worker in her home, the surface was fine. Everything was clean and well maintained. There was some food in the home, though very little. Finances, however, were a different matter. Predictably, Georgia was behind on many bills. Her mail was piled on a table in the corner, largely ignored. The surprise was that Georgia also had a well-organized box that contained her railroad pension checks from years past. The checks had never been cashed and were now uncashable because so much time had

passed. Georgia needed help with her finances.

Physically, Georgia was able to care for herself, but was a frail 95 pounds. She reported that she was not taking any medications and had a doctor that she saw from time to time, but “only when the weather is nice.” Georgia reported that she would walk the two miles to her doctor rather than take a cab; she was worried that the cab driver would rob her. Further investigation uncovered that Georgia had been a Group Health member, but her membership had been cancelled due to lack of payment. Georgia needed help with medical care.

The Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens Advocate, GRAT and APS all stayed in touch with Cindy, and luckily, Georgia trusted Cindy and Cindy was willing to help. She contacted Georgia’s cousin, who lived out of the area but was willing to help as well. The cousin set up bill-paying services for Georgia and got her reconnected with Group Health. Cindy and her husband pinned a note to Georgia’s door asking any utility workers to check with them before performing a shut-off. Cindy now visits Georgia daily. She is still concerned, but also relieved to know help is available if Georgia needs it.

Many people are in serious need of help. If you need a referral or know of someone who might need help, call the Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens at (206) 684-0500 or go to [www.seattle.gov/humanservices/mosc/](http://www.seattle.gov/humanservices/mosc/) on the Web.

## Calendar

### Healthy Aging Fair

*Thursday, May 11, 2006*

The Healthy Aging Fair, held during Older American Month (May), will provide senior citizens and Baby Boomers with information and resources relate to aging, such as nutrition, fitness, health promotion, home safety, prescription benefits, hospice, and meaningful social and volunteer opportunities.

**Time:** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Place:** Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens  
Central Building, 810 Third Avenue

**Info:** Call Cynthia Ellison at (206) 233-2781

### Coffee Hours with Councilmembers

*Thursday, May 18, 2006 & Thursday, June 15*

Seniors are invited to meet Councilmember Tom Rasmussen (May 18) and Council President Nick Licata (June 15) at a coffee social in the Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens. Bring your questions and comments about City programs and services. Coffee and cookies will be served.

**Time:** 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

**Place:** Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens  
Central Building, 810 Third Avenue (between Columbia and Marion Streets)

**Info:** Call the Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens at (206) 684-0500

### Active Aging in Livable Communities \* What Could Be Better? Healthy Aging Summit

*Thursday, May 18, 2006*

The Washington Alliance for Healthy Aging presents the 4th annual Healthy Aging Summit. The day will include a keynote address by Nancy Whitelaw, PhD, director of the National Council on Aging’s Center for Healthy Aging; model programs and partnerships; and presentations by federal and state policy makers.

**Time:** 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Place:** Tukwila Community Center  
12424 42nd Avenue S, Tukwila, WA 98168

**Info:** Call Karen Lewis at (206) 824-2907

### Senior Day at the Seattle Aquarium

*Sunday, May 21, 2006*

Join the Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens and Seattle Parks Senior Adult Programs for the annual senior lunch and walk-through at the Seattle Aquarium. Admission and box lunch are

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free. Parking is limited and transportation is not provided: call Metro at (206) 533-3000 for bus information. Note: Space is limited and advance registration is required.

Admission is on a first-call/first-serve basis. Make your reservation starting April 17 at 8 a.m. and ending May 5 at 4 p.m., or when full.

**Time:** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Place:** Seattle Aquarium, Pier 59,  
1483 Alaskan Way

**RSVP:** Call Seattle Parks and Recreations  
Senior Adult Program at  
(206) 684-4951

## Oldtimers Picnic

*Tuesday, August 29, 2006*

Seniors are invited to a free lunch, free admission, and a day of fun at the zoo. Space is limited; reservations are required. Note: Do not use your Gold Card for this event. We have special tickets. Groups are limited to 20 people maximum. Make your reservations starting July 10 at 8 a.m. (closes July 28 at 4 p.m. or when full).

**Time:** 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Place:** Woodland Park Zoo  
5500 Phinney Avenue N

**RSVP:** Call Seattle Parks and Recreation  
Senior Adult Programs at  
(206) 684-4951.

## Senior Day at the Columbia Center

*Sunday, September 17, 2006*

Adults 55 and over are invited to enjoy the spectacular view from the observation deck of the Columbia Center (formerly the Columbia Seafirst Tower). This opportunity is available weekdays for a nominal fee, but seniors can enjoy this special opportunity for free. Pre-registration is not required. The deck is wheelchair accessible.

**Time:** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Place:** Columbia Center, 701 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
(5<sup>th</sup> & Columbia)

**Info:** Call (206) 684-0500.

# Plan your financial future now!

*by Beverly Clark, Senior Rights Assistance  
Consumer Specialist volunteer*

What happened?

You are approaching retirement age (62-66) and you haven't saved enough money! You knew it but couldn't save more because of many things ? not earning enough, high living expenses, unemployment, divorce, health issues, helping your adult kids with your emergency savings, or spending habits that got you into credit card debt.

You may already be retired but know that you're running out of money or have been using credit cards to make up the difference for cash you don't have. No matter where you are in retirement or retirement planning, the days of "not thinking about your retirement needs" are over.

You've heard that Social Security was just supposed to be one leg of a three-legged stool for retirement – Social Security, pension monies, and personal savings. However, many of the calls to Senior Rights and Assistance (206-448-5720) are regarding consumer debt problems and housing issues. In the majority of calls, retired seniors end up with only Social Security to pay their living expenses. So instead of a three-legged stool, they are trying to balance on one leg. Some callers have been referred to the King County Debt Clinic (206-267-7070) for counseling on debt payment options or bankruptcy because their debt is so high there is virtually no chance that they can pay it off in their lifetime.

Many callers voice concerns about changing their lifestyle expectations and cutting back to face the realities of not enough money to pay current living expenses. It's a sad realization for many retirees that will probably get worse as Baby Boomers (the 76 million born between 1946-1964) start to retire.

Along the way, many corporations switched

from defined benefit pensions to 401K contribution retirement accounts, transferring the risk of providing for retirement from the employer to each individual worker. One of the main reasons for this is that people are living longer — 20 or more years after retirement. The result is a pension system that may become bankrupt.

## What to do now!

There's no better time than the present to write your personal plan of action:

1. Inventory all your assets (bank accounts, pensions, 401K's, Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs), home equity, possible inheritances, and Social Security benefits). Call 1-800-772-1213 to request an explanation of your options and benefits. The Social Security Administration automatically mails benefit statements each year. For the year 2000, the average Social Security payment was \$800 a month.
2. Estimate your current living expenses (mortgage payments, rent, utilities, car expenses, health insurance, taxes, etc.).
3. Estimate what you will need monthly to pay for your current lifestyle. Many financial experts state that once you retire you will still need 70-85% of your preretirement income. Is there a shortfall or a surplus? Prepare a budget for monthly and yearly totals. Currently inflation has been averaging about 3.15% per year. Will your assets provide for at least 20 years of retirement? If there is a shortfall, you will need to consider what actions to take.

## Actions to consider

1. Make an appointment with the King County Debt Clinic for a free 30-minute review (206-267-7070).
2. Open a money market savings account with your local bank or brokerage firm for the purpose of building a three- to six-month backup for living expenses and emergencies.
3. Pay off credit cards — pay the highest interest cards first or transfer debts to zero or

lower interest credit cards (Debt Clinic can advise you).

4. Participate in 401K plans — if your company matches a percentage of your contributions, try to take full advantage of at least that percentage! Start a Roth or regular IRA. Consider using no-load Index funds. Visit and talk with a financial advisor if you need more information, help or direction.
5. In the event you have a large shortfall, consider delaying retirement. Other options are home sharing and using public transportation instead of owning a car. Eliminate expenses such as cable television, cell phones, magazines, etc.

Think of getting on track for retirement as a challenge. Review your plan every three months. Reward yourself periodically with items that are not costly — use your public library, see a movie, lunch with friends ? you get the idea!

Once you have a plan of action, it can relieve the burden of the unknown and give you a focus for accomplishing your goals of retirement. Get started now — everything you do now will help with a more comfortable retirement.

## Age 55+ Employment Resource Center helps older workers meet basic needs

If you retired without sufficient retirement income, you may decide to go back to work. The Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens can help you find a job. Four job counselors in the Age 55+ Employment Resource Center, all older workers themselves, can help you prepare for and launch a job search, and advise you along the way. In 2005, the Age 55+ Employment Resource Center helped 590 older workers find work. For more information, call the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens at (206) 684-0500.



# A woman's key to better aging — make a habit of living a healthy lifestyle

by Dr. Maxine Hayes, Washington State Department of Health

We are living longer. By 2020, more than one million people in Washington will be 65 or older. That's almost twice the number of people in that age group today, with most of them being women.

There are many negative stereotypes about growing older — everything hurts, you have to stop doing things you enjoy and you lose your teeth and hair. These things are not inevitable! In fact, many age-related diseases and conditions are completely preventable, can be delayed or their symptoms reduced by making a habit of living a healthy lifestyle.

While lifestyle choices and behaviors continue to dominate the causes of chronic disease, it's never too late to begin taking care of yourself — your body and your mind. There are womb to tomb efforts that women can take to prevent serious illness and disease. With these tips, living longer can also mean living better, healthier lives.

## Avoid tobacco use

It's never too late to quit smoking. No matter how old you are or how long you've been smoking, quitting will significantly lessen your risk of smoking-related illness and early death. Call the toll-free Quit Line, 1-877-270-STOP (1-877-270-7867), or go to [www.quitline.com](http://www.quitline.com) on the Web.

## Stay physically active

Older women must be physically active to stay healthy and independent. Physical activity can prevent chronic conditions, including heart disease, cancer, stroke and diabetes. Exercise also helps maintain a healthy body weight, improve balance and prevent falls and fractures. Moderate activity at least 30 minutes per day, 10 minutes at a time and five days a week can make a big difference.

## Eat well

Eating well means a diet high in fruits, vegetables and whole grains, and low in saturated fats. A good diet in combination with physical activity is key to maintaining a healthy weight and reducing your risk of cancer, heart disease and diabetes:

- Eat a variety of healthy foods.
- Get at least five servings of fruits and vegetables a day — visit [www.5aday.org](http://www.5aday.org).
- Choose whole grains and low-fat dairy products.





- Choose fish, poultry and lean meats to reduce saturated fats in your diet.
- Eat amounts that are right for you and your level of physical activity. Drink plenty of water.
- Eat with other people — make your meals enjoyable!

## Get enough calcium

Keep your bones strong and healthy to prevent fractures. Women over age 50 should get 1200 milligrams of calcium and 400-800 IUs (international units) of vitamin D each day. Vitamin D allows the body to use calcium properly. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Calcium Nutrient Database ([www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/Data/SR16-1/wtrank/16-1a301.pdf](http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/Data/SR16-1/wtrank/16-1a301.pdf)) lists the calcium content of many foods.



## Visit your doctor

Cardiovascular disease (heart disease and stroke) and cancer accounted for more than 12,000 deaths among Washington women in 2002. Most of these deaths could have been prevented or delayed if the conditions had been detected early and treated. It's important to see a health care provider regularly. Find out about screening tests and immunizations you might need — such as flu or pneumonia shots and testing for blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes. Visit a dentist regularly and take care of your teeth ([www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/OHP/HealthyAging/stepsha\\_dental.htm](http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/OHP/HealthyAging/stepsha_dental.htm)); teeth and gums are important to overall health.

## Take medications, supplements and home remedies properly

- Tell your doctor, pharmacist and dentist about all prescription and over-the-counter medications, herbal supplements and home remedies you are using. Many medications and supplements can interfere with each other or cause adverse reactions when taken together, with certain foods or with alcohol.
- Tell your doctor, pharmacist and dentist about all health issues you have, especially when you are starting a new medication.
- Take your medications as the instructions tell you to and report any side effects to your doctor or pharmacist right away.
- Sometimes the amount you need of a medication can change. See your health care provider regularly and ask if your medication doses are correct.



Staying socially connected with family, friends and your community is important. Social isolation has a measurable impact on people's health.

More information on women's health ([www.4woman.gov](http://www.4woman.gov)) is available on the National Women's Health Information Center's Web site. Tips for healthy aging ([www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/OHP/HealthyAging/stepstohealthyaging.htm](http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/OHP/HealthyAging/stepstohealthyaging.htm)) are available on the Department of Health's Web site.



# Red Hatters are everywhere!

*by Pat Bertram, Bellevue Red Hatters; Carol Johnston, West Seattle Red Hatters; and Verna Busch, Jazzy Ladies Red Hat Society*



*Mayor Nickels mingles with Red Hatters*

The Red Hat Society is a women's movement changing the perception of aging women in the United States and around the world. This growing organization of women is uniting under the umbrella of a red hat to have fun and bond in sisterhood as we travel through life together.

There are currently over one million Red Hatters in more than 41,000 chapters across the United States and in 30 foreign countries. The first chapter was formed in Fullerton, CA in 1998 by Sue Ellen Cooper. Chapters follow no rules, believing that having fun and enjoying each other's

company is what really matters as members age. The Red Hat Society's motto is "Red Hatters Matter" and you will surely agree if you spend just a few minutes with a Red Hatter.

The Red Hat Society began because a few women decided to greet middle age with verve, humor and élan. Red Hatters believe silliness is the comedy relief of life, and since we are all in it together, we might as well join red-gloved hands and go for the gusto together. Underneath the frivolity, Red Hatters share a bond of affection, forged by common life experiences and a genuine enthusiasm for wherever life takes them next.

"Being 50 just is not what it used to be," said Pat Bertram. "Red Hatters are out there enjoying life and catching up after all the years of helping their families and others."

Women in their outrageous red hats and purple outfits are in groups at the mall, lunching in tea shops, attending theaters and even riding The Duck, an amphibious tour vehicle departing near Seattle Center.



*West Seattle Red Hat Society at the Swedish Center*

"Jazzy Ladies Red Hat Society started last year and has quickly grown to well over 40 members," said Queen Mother Verna Busch. "Twenty women attended our organization lunch on April 11, 2005 at the Garfield Community Center. After the lunch, 14 were eager to sign up and begin their shopping for red hats and purple outfits."

"In 2004, when I visited my family in Honolulu, I saw a truckload of Red Hat women in a St. Patrick's Day Parade, dressed in their colorful purple and red," said Carol Johnston, Activities Coordinator of the Senior Center of West Seattle. "I vowed to start a group when I returned to West Seattle."

Karen Sisson, director of the Senior Center of West Seattle, and other staff members promoted a meeting to start a Red Hat chapter. There are now 50 women in the West Seattle Red Hat Society. This group enjoys dressing up in colorful purple outfits topped off by outlandish red hats. Many have spent lots of money on their fancy chapeau but most delight in purchasing their clothes from thrift stores.

The Jazzy Ladies and the West Seattle Red Hat Societies have enjoyed many monthly outings, including lunch at South Seattle Community College, a ferry ride to Bainbridge Island, lunch at the Seattle Old Timers Picnic, walks in local parades, visits to the Frye Art Museum, and rides on the water taxi.

These women always draw attention from the public — especially the male population and many times from younger people wanting to know about their group. People see a beautiful sight, a sea of red hats and not one hat looks alike.

By the time they turn 50, Red Hatters have many life experiences in common and they are ready to make time for themselves. They are ready to laugh and enjoy life in a whole new way. With the right hat, the right purple outfit and the right companions, they are ready for a new adventure in disorganization in Red Hatting.



*More red hats*

## WARNING

*By Jenny Joseph*

*(Minchinhampton, England, 1961)*

When I am an old woman I shall wear purple  
With a red hat which doesn't go, and  
doesn't suit me.

And I shall spend my pension on brandy  
and summer gloves

and satin sandals and say we've no money  
for butter.

I shall sit down on the pavement when I'm  
tired

And gobble up samples in shops and press  
alarm bells

And run my stick along the public railings  
And make up for the sobriety of my youth.

I shall go out in my slippers in the rain

And pick the flowers in other people's  
gardens

And learn to spit.

You can wear terrible shirts and grow  
more fat

And eat three pounds of sausages at a go

Or only bread and pickles for a week.

And hoard pens and pencils and beermats  
and things in boxes.

But now we must have clothes that keep  
us dry

And pay our rent and not swear in the street

And set a good example for the children.

We must have friends to dinner and read  
the papers.

But maybe I ought to practice a little now?

So people who know me are not too  
shocked and surprised

When suddenly I am old, and start to wear  
purple.

# Portraits of Healing: A traveling exhibit supporting hospice



**Portraits of Healing**, a black-and-white photography exhibit by Seattle photographer Nancy Medwell, celebrates the extraordinary talents and gifts of hospice caregivers. Through the eyes of patients, their families, and their dedicated hospice caregivers, the story of hospice will be told with a yearlong traveling exhibit.

Many families in our community have no understanding of hospice care. Unfortunately, many will face a life-limiting illness and not know where to turn. The purpose of **Portraits of Healing** is to provide the community with vital information about hospice care, should they need it for themselves or a loved one.

In 2006, see **Portraits of Healing** at the following locations:

Seattle Repertory Theatre (April 8-May 8)

Rainier Square (May 9-June 1)

SeaTac International Airport (June-December)

For more information, contact Providence Hospice at (206) 320-4000, send e-mail to [hospiceinfo@providence.org](mailto:hospiceinfo@providence.org) or go to [www.portraitsofhealing.org](http://www.portraitsofhealing.org) on the Web.

## Spotlight

is published three times a year by the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens.

The Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens, part of Seattle/King County Aging and Disability Services and the Seattle Human Services Department, complies with all federal, state, and local laws prohibiting discrimination.

Accommodations for persons with disabilities will be provided upon request.

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Read the latest edition of **Spotlight**, the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens' newsletter. In this issue:

### Women and aging

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